

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, September 24. 1709.

I Gave you a short Observation in my last upon the Affairs of *France*, and the remarkable Reduction of the *French* Affairs, to the same or rather meaner Figure, in which the present Monarch of *France* began—— Give me Leave to end my Observations of these Things, with a Note or two upon our late Battle in *Flanders*, and the Endeavours of some to lessen the Advantage we obtain by it.

Mr. *Dyer*, an eminent News-Writer, who has always a Left-hand Stroke for the Government——Speaking of the Battle, has this happy Parenthesis, VICTORY, as *Mariborough* calls it.

I am neither advancing the Character, nor lessening the Merit of any Man; as

I scorn to flatter the Actions of the greatest Men, so I am not afraid to do Justice to the Behaviour of any Man, whether you like it or no—— And therefore according to the best Accounts we have yet seen of this great Action, I shall state it equally between the Parties.

I'll readily allow, That it has been a very bloody Action; that the *French*, who we boasted would never look us in the Face again, but would always play the *Wenendale*—Deceiv'd us in the Notion of being dispirited; that they fought like Men that knew their King and Nation, and all that was dear to them, lay at Stake——That they had the Advantages of Situation, Intrenchments, and superior Numbers, and that they

they disputed all these Advantages beyond all our Expectations.—That after seven Hours obstinate Fight, they made their Retreat in good Order, carry'd off their Cannon, and have all their Cavalry in general yet unbroken.—Having the Towns of *Maubeuge* on the Right, *Conde* on the Left, *Valenciennes*, and the Defiles of *Bavay* on their Reer, to secure them.—And after all I'll allow, That the Victory we have gain'd has cost us very dear, that we have lost Abundance of brave Officers and Soldiers in the Action, nay more than any Battle, during the whole War, has cost us.

I think in this, I grant almost all the Enemy themselves can ask.—And yet after all this, the Victory is undisputed, and in Spight of *Jacobite* or *High-Flying* Mortifications, will appear.

If pushing the Enemy from all their Intrenchments, if beating them out of all the Woods and Fastnesses, where they were posted with infinite Advantage; if fighting them through all the Barricadoes of Trees cut down, and Earth cast up at the Head of every Avenue; if taking the Cannon of the Intrenchments, and turning them upon themselves.—If the Colours and Standards taken, if the Prisoners surrendering, if the encamping all Night on the Field of Battle, and at last the pursuing the Enemy by our Cavalry to the Gates of their fortify'd Towns.—If these are sufficient to determine the Victory in our Favour, then it remains no more to be disputed.

To say it is a dear-bought Victory, is to say nothing; we must pursue Victory, and we must have it, how dear soever we buy it; and 'tis our Happiness, that we have Troops who dare pay for such a Victory every Campaign, and will give the Price, as long as *France* can take the Purchase.—We must not therefore argue our Loss against the Victory.—If you have beaten the Enemy out of the Field, you have what you fought for; and 'tis this Sort of making War that we desire.—Downright Fighting must be the only End of this War; at this Work you will be sure to ruin and reduce *France*.—I confess, at besieging great Towns, I think, we seem

to have the Disadvantage, because we ruin our Troops to get Ditches and Ramparts, and beat our Army to pieces against Stone Walls.—Which, after such fighting in this Manner, the *French* will give up without Blows.—One Battle in the Field seems to me to be worth three Towns taken.—And besides this, the Number and Strength of the Towns the *French* have, is such, that it gives us a melancholly View of the Length of the War.

But Fighting in the Field is the true Way to ruin *France*.—There we are pretty sure to overmatch them.—And whenever they are effectually beaten out of the Field, they must fall of Course.—It is therefore with good Reason, that the *Jacobite* Party among us endeavour continually to cry down our Victories, and to lessen our Advantages in the Field.—For this is still keeping up the Courages of the *French*, deferring and protracting our Expectations of a Peace.—And to the Honour and Glory of *Jacobitism* be it spoken, this is the main Pillar of their Cause.—Would some honest meaning People, who blindly fall in with *Jacobite* Councils, but consider, how strictly that Cause is link'd with the Destruction of the Protestant Interest in *Europe*, how incorporated with *French* and Foreign Influence, how the Success of Popish and *French* Powers against their native Country is their only Hope, and the Overthrow of Protestant Armies their Joy; would they give themselves leave to think of this a little, they would be apt to blush at themselves, and would soon abandon an Interest attended with such abhor'd Circumstances.

I think, the Advice to them to reflect on this, is given them with more Advantage, when it appears as now it seems to do, that we are in no great Danger of gratifying their Hopes, and when it is high Time for them rather to abandon their Cause, than to espouse it. The Victory over the *French* is manifest.—There remains no Room to scruple it; and those that are so fond of lessening it, do but discover what they would be at—what they would have, and direct us, what Care we ought to take of such People as they are, that wait for and

and rejoyce in the publick Disaster of their native Country.

I make no question, but the farther Evidences of this Victory will appear by Consequences, and in the Progress of the Confederates after it, together with the little Opposition the *French* will be able to make after such a Blow, to any of the Duke of *Marlborough's* Designs—— May

Heaven harden them to think they are not beaten, and to venture another Blow in the Field, and so on, till they have no more Generals to command, or Soldiers to fight; Since there is no question, *humanly speaking*, but so often as they shall venture to look us in the Face in the Field, so often we shall fight them, and so often be victorious over them.

MISCELLANEA.

I Have been a while interrupted by the glorious Course of our Successes abroad, from the Subject I was upon of the King of *Sweden's* Affairs in *Germany*: I have consider'd him in his broken Circumstances, as to *Muscovy* and *Poland*, and have spoken of him with all the Freedom, I thought Truth requir'd. I am now suggesting, what all our publick Accounts seem to imply, but what I am very far from wishing to be true, or concurring in, if true. *Viz.* That the *Dane* and the *Prussian* shall ingenuously take this Occasion, in Conjunction with the *Pole* and the *Muscovite*, to fall in upon the *Swedes*, under the Discouragement and Distractions of their present Circumstances, and under Pretence of recovering again what had been formerly ravish'd from them by the *Swedes*, and so at once dispossess the *Swedes* of their Dominions in *Germany*—To which the Protestant Interest has often been very much indebted, and of which they may hereafter stand again in great Need.

I shall not enter here upon the Dispute of Honour—as to falling upon a Prince, while under the Misfortune of his present Defeat and Flight—while being engag'd in so great a War abroad, he may be thought to be left naked and destitute at home. These nice Points are not so much consider'd in these Days, as to be worth our Debate; Kings and Princes make no Difficulty now to take Advantages of the Distresses and Misfortunes of their Neighbours, in a Manner private Gentlemen would think very dishonourable. The *Pole* and the *Dane*,

in the Beginning of this War, fell upon the *Swede*, in Conjunction with the *Muscovite*, when he was a Minor, and in ill Circumstances enough—The *Swede*, in the Case of General *Pikul*, and the Electorate of *Saxony*, seem'd to pay back the same Coin—The *French* fell on the Emperor, when embarrass'd with a War against the *Turk*—And I could come nearer to renew Instances of the like Sort, but I think they are needless.

Waving therefore any Pretences of its being dishonourable, I shall go on to shew, that it is not the Interest of the Protestant Princes of *Europe* to suffer the *Swedes* to be dispossest'd of their Possessions in *Germany*—And this, neither in Point of Commerce, or in Point of Religion.

As to Commerce; The *Dane* in his Attack upon *Holstein* becomes so formidable a Neighbour to the City of *Hamburg*, that he may with much Ease at any time oppress them—And if from *Gluckstadt*, which he is now possess'd of on the North Side of the *ELB*, he should invade *Bremen*, which now belongs to the *Swedes*, and make himself Master of the Fort of *SIODE*; upon the other Side of the *ELB*—by which the *Swedes* at this Time command the *ELB*, and receive a Duty of all Ships that pass and re-pass to *Hamburg*; should the *Dane* possess both Sides of the *ELB* in this Manner, they would immediately insult our Trade to *Hamburg*, and either impose upon us what Terms they please, or starve the City of *Hamburg*, by interrupting the general Commerce of the *ELB*.